

May 6, 2004

MEMORANDUM

To: Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Report on Endorsement of *Standards for Success*

Background

A copy of the booklet *Understanding University Success*, published by the American Association of Universities and The Pew Charitable Trusts, was purchased by the CHE and distributed to each member of the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs in July 2003. At subsequent quarterly meetings each institution was asked to review the “*Standards for Success*” identified for English, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, second languages, and the arts. To date, all feedback received has been positive. At its meeting on March 31, 2004, the Advisory Committee **endorsed** the standards.

The *Standards for Success* project is designed to provide guidance to high school teachers, administrators, and students in answering one essential question: “What must students know and be able to do in order to succeed in entry-level university courses?” The study process that produced the document emanated from the growing concern about the gap between high school exit standards and the expectations of colleges and universities. The project itself represents a major initiative to define what the college and university expectations are and to make available that information in a readily accessible format so as to facilitate the alignment of high school exit standards with college and university expectations.

The knowledge and skills standards identified in this document constitute general statements of expectations. In addition, the *Standards for Success* project compiled a CD-ROM which includes a complete set of student work samples spanning the standards; a second publication of more extensive samples of student work also exists. The standards may be viewed at www.S4S.org.

Subsequent to publication of *Standards for Success*, the project went on to study the alignment between 66 state tests with the standards. Unfortunately, South Carolina was not among the state tests. This study may also be reviewed at www.S4S.org.

Given our long-standing interest in helping high school students prepare themselves not only for successful college and university *admission* but also for successful college and university *completion*, the foundational skills and state standards identified after two years of extensive study provide valuable guidance to the high school community in South Carolina.

Please see <http://cepr.uoregon.edu/MixedMessages/index.asp> for more information about this extremely significant project. The staff will inform the K-12 community about the endorsement of *Standards for Success* by the chief academic officers of the public colleges and universities.

Recommendation

No action is necessary on the part of the Commission other than to accept this report as information.